

INTEGRITY

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Subject: Children, more or less

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EDITORIAL



CHILDREN today are optional. Whether one wants them or not can be a deciding factor in how many one has or doesn't have. This is a fact peculiar to our times. It presents moral problems rarely encountered in other centuries. The element of human prudence in the matter of regeneration has become increasingly important as science has discovered more and more about the biology of humans. The fact that many of our mothers and most, if not all, of our grandmothers let nature take its course, is not so praiseworthy when one considers that they had no conscious alternative. Continence for supernatural motives, which presupposes heroic virtue in both husband and wife, never was and never will be popular. The only controls over the conception of life afforded to the multitudes have been natural and unnatural birth control, and these methods have only been popularly understood in our times.

The Catholic is no less aware of this element of choice than is the pagan. He knows, however, that artificial contraception is gravely sinful. *If this is his only reason for avoiding it*, then it is not at all surprising that a substitute technique somewhat less *reliable* but not in itself sinful would find him a ready disciple. It is in this guise that the technique called Rhythm is being propagated. The zeal of some of its Catholic advocates would do justice to a crusader. The attitude current among many of the younger Catholic couples is that Rhythm is a recommended practice, verging upon a precept. On more than one occasion Catholic friends have told us that it is *more* Catholic to plan families by the use of Rhythm than to take the children as they come!

Since it has become a matter for human prudence, and because much of the education on the subject is recommendatory rather than cautionary, we have enlisted the capable and qualified services of Father Hugh Calkins, who weds wisdom with experience in *Rhythm—The Unhappy Compromise*.

As long as Economics continues to reign in the place of God, it will be difficult to convince people that having a normal quota of children is the best route to marital happiness. *Six Aren't Enough!* is the testimonial of a couple who has proved this fact and want to prove it to others.

Sally Whelan Cassidy outlines the characteristics of the apostolic family, a phenomenon actually realized socially in France, and toward which many groups are working here in America (*The Family Militant*).

The initial process of having children is, as they say, only beginning. The complications of sustaining and educating the child go on from there. Regarding these parental occupations, we present a bit on the principles of parenthood. The question unanswered in the minds of the voluntarily sterile is *Why Bring Up the Child?*

Secular high-school education in the big city receives lengthy consideration in *Bigbury High School*.

THE EDITORS



PLANNED PARENTHOOD ASSOCIATION

Rhythm—The Unhappy Compromise

What about Rhythm? That simple question is rapidly becoming storm center of controversy. It comes up during parish missions, Ana Conferences, bull sessions on careers, even high school retreats. All too often, wrong answers are given, bum theology is handed out. Even more often, right answers are given but very imprudently. These cause confusion among the laity and lead to cynical questioning. *Why don't priests get together on this thing* voices that cynicism.

This article will discuss Rhythm thoroughly. First, the latest and best theological thought concerning the morality involved shall be presented. This will remove the guesswork of beauty shop theologians and gabfest experts who too easily settle everything with: "Oh, Rhythm's okay. It's Catholic birth control." Secondly, we shall present the true picture of how Rhythm is currently being used around America. It is not a pretty picture, but it's based upon wide missionary experience and thorough research. It may surprise a few too glib advocates of Rhythm—lay, cleric, religious—to see how widely astray Catholic couples have gone on this moral question. Thirdly, we shall discuss how all this fits into a full Christian life, into the synthesis of religion and life any earnest Christian must promote, if we are "to restore all things in Christ."

Moral Considerations

Let's understand what we mean by Rhythm. Incidentally, we are permitted to discuss the method. The only official prohibition issued by the Church deals with the teaching and recommending of the method. Too long have we kept silent, while imprudently zealous advocates spread the method nationwide. The term Rhythm is a convenient name for a systematic method of performing marital relations on certain days of the month. The method is built around the rhythm of fertility and sterility which occurs in the monthly cycle of a woman's menstrual periods. Briefly, it now seems medically certain that on certain days of the month a woman is quite likely to conceive new life and on other days she is quite unlikely to conceive. The days on which conception is quite likely are called "fertile": those on which conception is quite unlikely are called "sterile." The Rhythm Method consists in following a systematic method of performing marital relations only on "sterile" days and abstaining on "fertile" days. This method is followed in order to space children or to avoid having children. Whether the method is used for a few months, a few years, or all during childbearing years, the motive remains the same. The motive in using this method is to avoid conception and pregnancy. Let's have no talk about "virtuous continence." That's a red herring often dragged

in to confuse the issue. The people who use Rhythm are not primarily concerned about continence. They seek to avoid conception. Hence they restrict sexual intercourse strictly to sterile days, safe periods.

This practice constitutes a moral problem only if considered a system—a system in which every act of sexual indulgence or abstinence becomes a part of an ingenious attempt to avoid the normal and natural consequence of marital union which is conception. So as isolated acts of marital union on sterile days or abstinence on fertile days are concerned, the ordinary moral rules prevail. Whenever marital relations occur, they must be properly and completely performed. An unnatural or artificial method used to prevent conception, whether before, during, or immediately after intercourse, would be labeled contraception—a grave sin against nature. So it's the morality of Rhythm as a system that we discuss. May a married couple by deliberate choice follow this method in order to avoid conception?

Contrary to widespread misunderstanding, Rhythm is *not* the same as contraception. It's true that often the aim of the married couple is the same—they use Rhythm to avoid conception—but their method is not the same as the birth-controller. The practice of Rhythm is natural so far as the biological aspect is concerned. The practice of contraception is unnatural, against nature, a perversion just as truly as homosexuality. But just because Rhythm is "natural" doesn't mean it is always morally good and permissible. The practice of Rhythm proceeds from a free and deliberate will—the will not to have children—that is directly opposed to the primary purpose of marital relations ordained by God. Is such a free will choice contrary to the will of God and sinful?

Without getting too technical, there are two schools of thought on the essential morality of Rhythm as a system. The more common opinion, the majority opinion, holds that this method is *not of itself* illicit. It could become sinful due to particular circumstances or dangers. The less common opinion, the minority opinion, holds that the use of Rhythm *is of itself* illicit, and becomes lawful only when there is sufficient cause present for sidestepping the primary purpose of marriage. Both opinions are approved by expert theologians: you may follow either one until the Church makes an official pronouncement on the subject. But keep in mind that all theologians hold certain basic facts to be true. There is perfect agreement among theologians that Rhythm *can become sinful* because of circumstances and dangers involved.

Important Conditions

So we can summarize the latest and best theological thought on the subject. The Church neither approves nor disapproves of the Rhythm Method as a system to be followed. The Church merely

tolerates the use of this method. Tolerates indicates reluctant permission. And the Church only tolerates this method, when three definite factors are present. These three are: *First*, there is a sufficiently serious reason for a given couple to use this method, sufficiently serious enough to justify side-stepping the first purpose of marriage; *Second*, both husband and wife are truly willing to follow the method—neither one can force the other to adopt this system; *Third*, the use of this method must not cause mortal sins against chastity nor become a proximate occasion of such sins. The breakdown of any one of those three factors makes the use of Rhythm sinful. So the correct attitude is this: *The use of Rhythm is sometimes no sin, sometimes venial sin, sometimes mortal sin.* Please stop saying: "Oh, it's okay, the Church approves it."

Now study carefully those three factors. First, a sufficient reason: theologians admit there are at times solid reasons to justify the use of the Rhythm system. These reasons may be permanent or only temporary—poverty, poor health of the mother (real, not pretended), frequent still-births or Caesarean births, medical necessity of spacing births because of the unusual fecundity of the wife; in other words, solid and honest reasons for avoiding births for a time or maybe for all time. But even when such honest reasons are present (and so often today they are not), it still remains true that husband and wife must both be truly willing.

But all too often in actual daily life, one spouse is unwilling and is being high-pressured by the other. All moral theologians would condemn as grave sin the exclusive use of the sterile period when it is not a truly free agreement on both sides. If not free, a grave injustice is done the other spouse, who is not willing and has a right to marital relations. Do selfish and domineering wives think they fool God on this?

Most critical of all three factors is the third. The use of Rhythm must not produce proximate occasions of mortal sin nor actual mortal sin. All moral theologians agree serious sin results for a couple when there is proximate danger of infidelity, birth-prevention methods, or solitary sin by either spouse. Such dangers and such mortal sins are frequent in our materialistic age. Confessors would do well to investigate the close relationship between "cheating" by married people and their use of Rhythm. So a good reason by itself is not enough. Circumstances change cases. A confessor's help is advised. More about those three factors later.

Assuming there is free consent and no special dangers of mortal sin, would a couple be justified in using Rhythm for only selfish reasons? Theological opinion is divided: some say such a course would be mortally sinful, others say venially sinful. But all eminent theologians say such a course would be sinful and fraught with grave danger.

The more you study the theologians on this question, the more you see how cautious priests and laity should be in advocating Rhythm. You see why the Holy See, only with reluctance, *tolerates* this method. It certainly has never been declared officially that the Holy See *approves* of the "safe period" method. Not even the much-quoted paragraph from the *Chaste Wedlock* encyclical of Pius XI can be accurately used as giving such approval. It is far more likely that Pius XI was referring to physically sterile people ("certain defects") or those who have passed the menopause ("reasons of time") and not to the use of Rhythm. Yet the new supercolossal campaign for selling Rhythm condoms by mail dares to quote the Holy Father in approval of such crass commercial restriction of birth.

Face the Cold Realities

Now that we've laid the theological groundwork, let's be terribly practical. Catholic couples have gone hog-wild in the abusive employment of Rhythm. Theological distinctions have been pitched completely in the utterly selfish desire to avoid conception at any cost. Too many priests are acting imprudently in the public recommendation (in classrooms and sermons) of the method which the Holy See has cautioned "the confessor may cautiously suggest." There is abundant evidence increasing daily that only spiritually strong couples can be trusted really to observe Rhythm prudently, even when a sufficient reason is present. All too many other couples say they're using Rhythm and they really are following a system of "Don't become pregnant at any cost." So they use Rhythm, when it "works," varied methods of contraception when it doesn't work, and even abortion when they get "caught" (what an expression to describe the start of an immoral existence). Yet all the time such people try kidding confessors with "Oh, no, no birth control, we just use Rhythm."

It's becoming a scandal to their sincere neighbors. John Doe, no theologian. He doesn't make fancy distinctions between unnatural and natural birth control. All he sees is these selfish couples are married and don't have kids—even brag about how they're through having any more. He begins to wonder how they can so easily go to Confession and Communion. I'm beginning to wonder too. Even our adversaries throw a body blow at us by saying: "What's the difference? You forbid contraception so firmly, but your couples slip through by using Rhythm."

Promoting Sterility

The thing is out of hand. A method meant to be a temporary solution of a critical problem has become a way of life, a very self-

luxury-loving, materialistic way of life. What theologian would ever justify practices like these actual cases I now cite: parish priests giving a copy of a book on Rhythm to each engaged couple with a word of approval; preachers explaining in weekend retreats the advantages of this method for having children as you planned them; teachers in some of our best colleges teaching the method, often to girls who are well off financially; gynecologists lecturing in leading Catholic medical schools and telling classes of young doctors how to teach this method to patients, so that the doctors assume Church approval to recommend the method has now been given them; engaged couples planning their wedding day with rhythm cycle all plotted so no pregnancy results until a year or two passes, so that they can enjoy all the privileges and none of the obligations of marriage.

It's one thing to permit Rhythm reluctantly, as the Church officially does. It's quite another to become promoters of sterility, as too many of our people have. Naturally, the commercializing of Rhythm has hit a new high. Expensive gadgets are now available—"every medical and theological student, nurse and social worker should have one" reads the blurb. So now our people have fool-proof methods of making love by a calendar," effectively blocking God's creative designs. It's enough to make God vomit out of His mouth the creatures who ignore so completely the divine purposes of marriage. How will we ever convert godless America, how produce modern saints, if we won't give God citizens for His Heavenly Kingdom? And most ironic of all, Catholics so anxious to be in on Catholic Action (which to them means anything from bingo to flag-waving) are often the most determined advocates of Rhythm. They labor so hard to get others to attend lectures, Cana Conferences, book reviews; but to have babies as God wants them to—don't be silly. Have you noticed the heavy emphasis on Rhythm among our wealthy parishes, among our college graduate couples, our social and cultural leaders?

Rhythm Mentality

So there has sprung full-grown from pagan propaganda this vicious Rhythm mentality—a state of mind that won't trust God. Our moderns concede God knows how to balance the universe in the palm of His hand, knows how to harness atomic energy, can dangle stars and planets at His fingertips, but children? Oh, no, God just doesn't know how to arrange things there. We'll take care of that through family planning. But the planning centers about how *not* to have a family. So our do-gooders extoll either the practice of total sexual abstinence (oh, so piously), even when the other partner is unwilling and is being unjustly defrauded, or the practice of methodical Rhythm. They don't admit or don't care about the mortal sins such systems

produce. They are determined: No Pregnancy Now. There's the state of mind that despairs of God's help.

These bleeding hearts, especially busybodies-in-law and nosy neighbors, scream protestingly: "Who'll take care of the next baby? The simple answer is: The same God that takes care of you even when you resist His Will. "But we must give our children security and education." Just because God doesn't give parents and children today's phony materialistic standards require, doesn't mean He fails them. He didn't give His own mother much in material security. In heaven, not security, is the goal set for the babies God sends. Established marriage primarily to give children life in this world that would bring eternal life.

Too many people are trying to play God. God alone is still the Author of new life. And God doesn't need alarmist doctors, despairing parents, nor even thoughtless priests trying to run His affairs and deciding when new life shall be born. What God wants from us is free will cooperation with His Will. That's the one contribution alone can make. What God demands from married partners is *willingness* to have the children He shall decide to send. People get to heaven only by doing God's Will, not by planning things for Him.

Well, then, should every couple have a flock of children? That's up to God. Every couple should have the children God wants them to have. But they are not having them. Forty-four per cent of American families have no children. Twenty-two per cent have only one child. And Catholics living in cities now have far fewer children than families in rural areas (which are about eighty per cent Protestant). Obviously, family planners are planning families out of existence. That certainly is not God's Will. The use of Rhythm by so-called "devout Catholics is a major factor in that falling birth rate. You say the birth rate is up higher now? Yes, on first and second babies. But it continues to fall steadily in the number of third, fourth or later babies.

Too Much Prudence

The Rhythm mentality has a tear-jerker argument. It's turned full stops, something like this: "But God wants people to use prudence in bringing children into the world. Neither God nor His Church demands people have as many kids as possible. People should use discretion, be decent enough to plan their family. Isn't it far better that a few kids be well fed, clothed, educated than a large family endure poverty." It sounds good, doesn't it? People advancing the line are often quite righteous about it. With pharisaical smugness, they feel sorry for "imprudent pregnancy" of poor parents. But I'm sure of them. They're the kind who probably pitied Mary of Nazareth carrying a Baby God had sent, but for whom Joseph and Mary could

and a home (talk about a housing shortage and tough landlords). They're the kind who pitied my own mother, when she carried me, her twelfth child. Sweet chance I, and many another poor kid like me, would have to be priests, if Rhythm mentality prevailed. And what would the bleeding hearts of another day have done about Nancy Banks carrying the baby who became Abe Lincoln? There would have been no Bernadette of Lourdes, coming from a jail flat, nor Teresa of Lisieux, from sickly parents and a mother who lost three babies in a row, and most certainly not a Catherine of Siena, a twenty-third child, if the "prudent planners" had their way. What all these extollers of prudence forget is: God's Will is the end of man. The essence of sanctity is doing His Will within our state of life. It's His job to run the world: ours to do His Will. Prudence is a cardinal virtue, highly praiseworthy indeed. But faith, hope and charity are supernatural virtues far more praiseworthy. *And the greatest of these is charity.* What nobler way to practice charity than to cooperate with God in passing on new life, when God wants it to be born, not when humans think it should? Let only God play God.

Hidden Costs

"Such a manner of using the marriage right, followed without a very serious reason during all, or almost all of the married life, is opposed to the plan of Providence for the propagation of the human race, represents a serious attack on the honor of marriage and particularly on the dignity of the wife, and creates grave dangers for the married people." So spoke the Bishops of Belgium in their Fifth Provincial Council back in 1937. Their words point up the hidden costs of using Rhythm. Take that point on debasing the honor of marriage and lowering the dignity of the wife. Fifty per cent of today's mothers are neurotic, say several leading non-Catholic psychologists. In many cases, Rhythm produces the neurosis. It made the "rejecting mother" type. She "got caught" with a pregnancy she had sedulously fled. The unwanted pregnancy results in the lonely, neurotic, unwanted child. Neurosis like this can increase sterility, so often when the "Rhythmeer" finally wants a baby, she can't have one. It's odd that women can't see the debasing results of a system that uses them systematically to satisfy sexual desires but seldom to produce children.

Advocates of Rhythm are fond of stressing how "natural" the method is. But as Father Lavaud, O.P., has said: "We cannot see an adaptation to nature in something which is, in effect, a trick to frustrate nature." Rhythm is quite unnatural as currently employed. It requires the couple to "make love by a calendar," so charts, gadgets, graphs rule romance, not the loving desire of devoted partners. Some medical men assure us a wife's desire for marital union is most vehement precisely during the fertile period. It appears the Jews followed a more

natural procedure in abstaining during sterile periods, as the Book of Leviticus indicates. Even Dr. Ogino, the originator of the method, viewed the method primarily as a means of having children. "Rhythm in reverse," having relations on fertile days just to have children naturally.

Another hidden cost is infidelity. Women puzzled by male men behaving at certain time periods might well remember the desires of the flesh respect no calendar. And remember, too, man's sexual life follows a monthly cycle of vehemence and subsidence, as well as a change of life later. Men not living a properly satisfactory sexual life with wives, too much calendar restriction, are easy victims to feminine wiles outside the home. The coolness and jittery bickering caused by Rhythm is incalculable. The fulfillment of marriage as a vocation demands that husband and wife minister to each other's needs through tenderness and understanding often best expressed through the love-making and intimate union postponed by the Rhythm calendar. How stupid to live a love-life holding your breath.

Who shall estimate the hidden costs generated in a woman's financial adjusted emotional and psychical life through *fear of having another baby*. Once such fear is implanted, how difficult to eradicate it. How easily it leads to desperation about avoiding pregnancy at all costs. **Be sure that Satan knows** how to employ it to create despair about trusting God. Only in eternity shall we know the immortal souls denied a chance at heaven because they were snuffed out through abortion caused by such fear.

The New Synthesis

What's the answer to all this bogeyman propaganda about babies? It could be expressed in the word *Vivant* ("let them live"). One group of splendid parents in Milwaukee have taken that word as their slogan and the title of their magazine circulated among young married couples. It's a vivid expression of the forgotten virtue of hope. God's providence still rules the world. True Christians, mindful of their supernatural birth at Baptism, the growth of that life of grace through Mass, Sacraments and prayer know that hope not only springs eternal but it brings eternity as its reward. It devastates right here on earth the creeping paralysis of despair born of these hard times. It cures insecurity by abandoning itself to the constantly supporting arms of God. Married couples, so fearful of what to eat and wear with children arriving, need frequent meditations on that famous sixth chapter of Matthew: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and these things shall be added unto you." Seeking His justice means doing His Will, doing it with hope in your heart that God will provide a reward generosity. He never is outdone in generosity, as we all should know from experience. Surprising how God fills your heart and life

with pulsating affection of children, once you trust Him enough to have the children. Surprising how little warmth there is in the milk coat, the vacation, the television set, the car that you fought so hard for, while denying your arms the warm embrace of children. Or is all this surprising? God keeps His word.

It would be well to meditate frequently on Paul's vivid reminders about "the great Sacrament" married people give each other on their wedding day. Matrimony joins two hearts and souls and lives by fusing natural and supernatural bonds that day. God and husband and wife become partners that a great vocation might be fulfilled. The virtue of hope receives a mighty increase that day through the grace of Matrimony. At every instant of their married life, the married couple has God's assurance that His grace is sufficient for them. No obstacle is insurmountable to God.

As Father Orville Griesse, in his famous book, *The Rhythm in Marriage and Christian Morality*, says: "Christian couples ought to realize that it is a singular, providential blessing to be able to bring forth new life, thus assuring man and wife of a deeper, most lasting union, offering them means of personal sanctification and of contributing to the strength and growth of both Church and State. The mere fact that the future looks a little uncertain or that the child might be frail or sickly is no reason for substituting faith in the biological computations of the safe period method for trust in God."

HUGH CALKINS, O.S.M.



Six Aren't Enough!

We first began to realize that we might some day have a B family when we found that John, our second boy, was going to follow fast on the heels of Jim, the oldest. We had been married less than a year and a half. We had a nice little home, rent very low, some distance out of town, and my job seemed pretty secure. In fact, we were already working overtime in the shop with defense work. And look back now, things really looked pretty optimistic. Jim, who had been too frail to take home from the hospital for several weeks, had long since made up for lost time. I don't remember now how Ellen looked, but Ellen insisted he was the most beautiful baby she had ever seen. But she's said that about each of them in turn since then.

Somewhere we had both remembered hearing that a child is truly a gift from God. And it seemed like such a beautiful way of expressing the joy of seeing ourselves repeated in our first-born. We blissfully used that expression in talking of babies with other married couples. The indulgent smile we got left us cold, and it wasn't long before we realized that babies were not considered gifts of God at all. I don't think that either of us ever mentioned that idea again until a few months ago.

And then with the same simpleness that had led us to believe that babies were gifts from God, we let our friends in on the good news about the second baby's coming. We found out right away that we had done something not quite right.

"Wow—that'll be two kids in less than fourteen months!"

"What are you trying to do, Morgan, set a record?"

"How's Ellen taking it? I hope she's feeling all right."

"Well, that's going to be real nice, having your family right at the start so you can grow up with them. . . . I wish we had done that with our two."

In general, though, Ellen's friends were quite sympathetic and I seemed pretty good. Jim was practically no care at all. The joys of making a home and caring for a baby of her own and trying new recipes, kept her contented. We used to read letters and articles in women's magazines and in the newspapers telling how a new baby had driven a wedge between some man and his wife—she loved the baby and forgot about her husband, or the father resented the baby taking so much of his wife's time, or the wife feared another childbirth so much that she lived in constant fear—well, we'd read the stuff and looked at each other and wonder what they were talking about.

John came into the world late in the fall. Ten days later we were all home together, the bills were paid, the house was comfortable, our boys were both well and strong, and we were all happy.

On her check-up visit the doctor was pretty definite in advising Ellen not to have another baby for a while. She asked him to be honest and tell her just where she might expect trouble. He couldn't give her any definite answer. (We found out later that this is routine advice today for most doctors to give.) But he did remind her she'd had two babies in just over a year, and even if she were in good health—well, it just wasn't the thing to do. So at least we had been warned.

Our conversation with other young Catholic couples switched from talking about babies to talking about not having babies. No one, it seemed, thought one could depend on Rhythm, but what can one do about it? We started reading the church-rack pamphlets on birth control, and read the familiar book by the Latz Foundation. I guess that by the time we found out that God had planned Dan to follow John by fourteen months, we were fully in accord with the righteousness of "planning a family the way *we* wanted and could care for them."

In the meantime we'd had an opportunity to buy a home "on a shoestring." After moving, there were hundreds of jobs that just had to be done at once. The new house did look pretty shabby, and after we found Dan was coming we made up our minds to show our friends that having a family didn't mean we couldn't have a home of our own, too. So we worked and worked. We wallpapered and painted. Ellen would hold boards and help measure while I sawed. We even dug a new well, with no help. We worked every night and every weekend for months and months.

But it began to tell on Ellen. All this work and no sign of a set-up—and another baby coming in early winter. That we surely hadn't counted on when we bought the house. There were only two bedrooms—what if it were a girl? And why did God want to make it so hard for us?

Neither of us had ever been a particularly strong Catholic. Ellen's folks, who weren't wealthy at all, had made the mistake of sending her to a wealthy girls' Catholic high school. Along with algebra, French and dramatics, she learned that one's success in married life was (and still is, I guess) judged by the speed and manner in which one acquired an apartment, good-looking clothes, a car, furniture, an annual vacation trip, one baby, two children, in that order.

Now the pressure would really be on. We knew better than to tell anyone we were going to have another baby, until it couldn't be kept a secret any longer. We knew enough never to bring the subject right out for discussion. One hints about it in a roundabout, gay manner, as if it's sort of a joke on one, finding one is going to have another baby. Ellen's folks didn't say anything; they had had a big family themselves. They felt sorry for us, but the rest of her family were not so charitable: "She ought to know better than to ruin her

health." "You can't ever be normal or happy with kids coming on after another like that." One hears that from enough people, many of them apparently meaning well, and one gets to believing it after a while. Furthermore, we didn't really know of anyone who had ever had children so close together.

Dan came into the world big and healthy, quite oblivious to his parents' complexes, and was baptized right after the New Year. Now we had another chance! After all, three children were not too many even though we had been married but three years. The house kept our minds off our worries. Each weekend's work always was planned far ahead of time. When Saturday overtime became standard, progress nearly stopped on the house, but to compensate for it we found we were earning more money than we'd ever dreamed was possible.

By the time Dan was almost a year old, there was still no sign of a baby on the way. We had even been able to save a few hundred dollars in bonds. Maybe God wasn't so unjust to us after all. Maybe we wouldn't end up with a whole houseful of kids. By careful planning and saving we'd be able to send the three boys to a good Catholic high school and college. And they wouldn't have to feel different from the crowd.

For the first time in our married life we found ourselves thinking like the "don't havers." Once one starts raising a big family one starts classifying Catholics into one of two kinds: those that have a large family and those that don't. The ninety per cent or so that don't never have been able to. They may want more children badly, but they may be, like so many are, "spacing" children with the spaces as fully far apart after the third baby. But whatever their reasons, when one feels that God is burdening one with children others should have had (and that's the way we sometimes felt, I'm ashamed to say) one puts all the "don't havers" on one side of the line and oneself and a few others on the other side.

Since then we've thought about this many times and talked it over with others who have tried raising a big family on a Sunday-morning ration of Catholicism. And except for those who get strong moral support from their families or friends, nearly all of them felt this same temptation to judge others, often very unfairly.

Well, we had, for no apparent reason, and with some misgivings, joined the ranks of the "don't havers." We began having money to spend on just "extras." We knew the house we were in never would do, so we began to look for a better home. We hunted and hunted, and called, I believe, every real estate office in town. But this was a boom town and the price of the kind of home we wanted was already out of our reach. We finally gave up hunting.

Then it was that we discovered another baby was on the way. This time Ellen was just tired out and blue almost constantly. The children were good; we'd always kept firm discipline but three boys are still three boys. We were in the same boat all over again only this time it was just that much worse. Ellen felt so badly about the way things were going that she stopped going to Confession for many months. She knew it was wrong to feel the way she did but there was no use trying to feel sorry for it. I used to get peeved at her because she didn't even want to try pulling out of it. I remember pulling all the tricks, buying her something pretty and praising her, or taking over care of the boys when I came home from work. I guess I tried everything but understanding her. Both of us had had Catholic homes and schooling, thank God, and the memory of them kept us going through the routine of church on Sunday. But I had to keep my mind a blank when these thoughts would start closing in on me: "Why does God pick on *us*? Why couldn't He give us just a little more time? "Doesn't He know that the mess we're in will prove to the 'don't havers' that they're right?"

We were back in the ranks of the "havers" for sure, but now we were in a class by ourselves. Four kids in less than five years! We drew apart from everyone as much as we could. We knew the advice, sarcastic and solicitous, would soon be coming so we tried to avoid exposing ourselves to it as much as possible. A man can laugh or shrug off this kind of hypocrisy, but it isn't so easy for a mother. What hurt Ellen most of all were the seemingly endless uncharitable remarks of other women, especially Catholics who ought to know better. Thank God we had a few close friends who were either neutral or who felt as we did about raising a Christian family.

And then a few months before Mary was to arrive we found a house, better than we had ever hoped for, right on the edge of town. It had enough bedrooms, a big back yard and a garden. It was old, and it cost more than we could really afford but it was wonderful. We sold our other home as it was and moved in here as soon as we could. We are in this home, we hope, for the rest of our lives.

The job of moving and cleaning and painting helped keep our minds off our troubles. When the time came in the fall, Ellen's aunt took care of the boys while she was in the hospital with Mary. Believe it or not, the Morgans really had a baby girl of their own. I'll never forget the dreamy look in Ellen's eyes when I tiptoed into her room a few minutes after Mary was born. "She's a girl, Bill, a girl!" "Just think—our own little girl." And she closed her eyes for that long, wonderful sleep of a new mother.

Just the thought of a little girl put new life in both of us. After all, four children weren't so bad—we had a home big enough to hold

all of them and more. I was working long hours on secret war work so money was plentiful. Best of all, Ellen was feeling wonderful again. Mary and the boys were all as healthy as could be.

We often look back and talk over the change that took place in our lives with Mary's coming. Somehow or other the arrival of Betty less than a year and a half later seemed perfectly natural. Ellen was busy to her ears in work, the mending pile grew larger instead of smaller, but the important things got done. We still can't understand it, but it seemed the larger the family got the calmer and less irritable we got. Things that bothered us before seemed unimportant to us now. Our home wasn't any less attractive; things were just better organized. Ellen and I both became more efficient and, what's more, we liked it. The older children were starting to be of some help with chores around the house and disciplining five turned out to be no worse than training three. The youngsters amused and taught each other.

By the time Betty came, our circle of friends had changed almost completely. Ellen's high school friends had dropped away (or she had dropped them) one by one. Several out of her class of over a hundred were married and having families, and when we heard of them we looked them up, making some wonderful new friends. No longer and then some one would say a few sincere words of encouragement to us, particularly older parents whose children were grown. This helped a lot. Younger girls started coming occasionally to Ellen for advice, and instead of my family being the butt of jokes at work became more of a curiosity. Some of the men had a genuine interest, so I kept them amused (and still do) with the never-ending comedy of watching the Morgan kids grow up.

We began to read Catholic literature in earnest, and found the answers to most of the "don't havers'" assumptions. We started to ask embarrassing questions instead of being "nice" and just listening. Ellen realized suddenly that if one really believes in what one is saying and offers a little prayer to the Holy Ghost while talking, one usually says the right thing. One can break down that false front of righteousness that most of the "baby spacers" assume and leave them flat at a point where further discussion is ridiculous. One can smile while doing it and they'll leave, still one's friends.

Ann, our youngest, is now almost a year old. Next year the boys will all be in school. (The thrill of having our oldest make his First Holy Communion is overwhelming.) With each of the six children, aside from the great spiritual uplift which was sometimes hidden, has come a material boost in the form of a raise or promotion, or some other obvious gift which could be nothing else but God's providence. But with Ann came the greatest gift of all—the realization of what being a Catholic, and particularly a Catholic parent, really means.

Integrity has helped us to part of that great realization. Many other good books and magazines have helped, too. We believe one of the greatest helps was the opportunity to attend a Family Renewal Day; in some places they are called Cana Conferences. We spent a full Sunday listening to lectures on the problems of marriage today. There were frank question and answer periods that got right down to earth. Father told us what marriage means as a Sacrament, how every good act in marriage develops man and wife, bringing them closer to God. We learned, for the first time, that in creating life, man and wife are fulfilling the highest goal of the Sacrament of Matrimony, and that the creation of life requires a separate and distinct action on the part of Almighty God. Cooperating with man and wife, He infuses into the tiny cell at the moment of conception an immortal soul.

We learned that we're having such an awful time trying to figure out "the connection between religion and life" simply because the whole world we live in has, in the last thirty years or so, turned almost completely to paganism, with here and there a humanitarian, Protestant veneer. Today we are all being trained in the school of selfishness, from the day we are born. We go to Catholic schools, listen to Catholic sermons and belong to Catholic organizations, but we "don't get the connection." Our whole lives are so emasculated with materialistic ideals that many a Catholic is proud that he can be a Catholic and not have to be *different*—like the "Christian Scientists who can't even call a doctor" or "the Jehovah Witnesses who always look so unhappy selling anti-religious magazines on the streets."

That same kind of thinking makes it very easy for parents to justify not having a baby until after they are married a few years (when two people are "well adjusted" to each other), not realizing that sharing the job and the joy of caring for their own flesh and blood will bring them closer together than reading a whole library of books on marriage. Selfishness must lie behind many of the arguments of Catholic parents who talk about wanting "quality in their children instead of quantity." But any nun or CYO Chaplain, or policeman or Court judge, will tell one that, other things being equal, children from a big family are just as intelligent, better disciplined, better adjusted, more wholesome, more unselfish, and more trusting than children from a family of one or two.

I often wonder as I look up and down the tables at the monthly Holy Name Communion Breakfast, how many of the men realize that by refusing to rear a big family they are endangering their souls and the souls of their children. We have no exact statistics to compare relative family size in our own parish, a typically young and active parish, with an equal number of pagan or Protestant families, but we have made it a point in the last several months to note family

sizes and attitudes toward family size in talking to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, and there doesn't seem to be much effective difference. Although the number of so-called Catholics who use contraceptives must be terrible, the birth prevention slogans have been pretty well accepted as truths by almost all Catholics. What else can account for the very few families of more than four in the average city parish today? We can't judge individuals but it's folly to say we must judge whole parishes.

In all the years we've been married, other than at our Family Renewal Day, neither of us has heard one word from the pulpit of the glory and the joy and the grace that God reserves for the parents and the children in a big family living His way. We've heard scarcely anything on the real purpose of marriage. We're all proud of our schools and our churches, but how many of us are as worried about the souls of the children that must some day be supplied to fill them. Because of today's prosperity, many couples are having children because they can afford them, and still have a pleasant life. But what about the next slump? If children are last on the list, what good will our empty schools be then?

If the creation of life is the highest goal of marriage, it seems that we ought to hear occasional sermons reminding all of us about just that. If God planned the Christian family for two thousand years, we ought to be able to trust Him more than our pagan doctors. As the divorce and domestic trouble rate goes up directly as the number of children in a family goes down, we ought to see the handwriting on the wall.

Looking back on our own experience, it's easy to see how the burdens we resented were the means by which God was to give us the grace really to begin living for the first time in our lives. Most young Catholic couples start out without too much prejudice against a normal family. They're willing to be "freaks" in the eyes of the world and heroes in the eyes of God, if they can just get a little moral support from their friends, from other Catholics, and from their pastors.

The social and economic pressure against a real family puts normal parents on the defensive, so much so that they now exert little influence in life almost anywhere. Normal families ought instead to be getting together. Think of what a tremendous influence such families, aware of their kinship in the Mystical Body of Christ, and strengthened by their trust in the Holy Ghost and in each other, could have on the whole environment. A big family has always been one of God's greatest gifts. Today it has a special meaning because it can help but change the direction of one's whole life and the lives of one's children and their children, long after all of us are gone.

BILL MORGAN

Why Bring Up the Child?

It is apparent that interest in the child is on the upswing. Perhaps it is a strange thing when we take into consideration the fact that the child is becoming more and more rare. But I suppose it is this very fact that moves every parent to desire to produce the perfect specimen, and every pediatrician to give forth with the perfect pointers on how this is done.

The New York Times has a special weekly page called *The Parent and the Child*, and so has every other newspaper. In magazines there are numerous articles giving ideas good, bad, and indifferent on child training. It is quite a business—this child care and development. And it is being given over more and more into the hands of specialists. Nursery schools insure the child of expert care at an early age. Even before that, while he is still an infant, development clinics determine whether his mental progress is normal. And even before he is born there are special courses and classes for both his father and mother. For they too must become specialists, and since too often they are specializing in one child, it is impossible for them to learn by experience.

All these sessions, courses and columns are concerned with the "how" of child-upbringing. The question, "Why bring up the child?" may sound facetious, yet it is the root of the problem. And no one bothers discussing it. Planned parenthood associates have fully discussed "Why have the Child?" and resolved this question with many answers why not to have him. But everyone knows that once a child is here you have to do *something* about him, and child psychology is the *something done*.

"Why bring up the child?" may sound like a ridiculous question to Christians, and they have every right to think so, since the simplest of them knows the right answer. But since so few of us are Christian today (in the places where it counts most—in our hearts and our heads) we may do well to think this question over and examine its implications fully. To do this we have to know the origin of the child, his purpose in life, his place in the scheme of things, and his nature.

The importance of these matters was brought home to me recently when I listened to a lecture by a Catholic pediatrician who omitted them all from his talk. Perhaps he felt they were implied in what he said, and charity makes us believe that at least personally he is aware of their importance. But their omission reduced his lecture to the naturalistic, secularistic level, and made "the happy life" he envisioned for the child seem the work of a sincere pagan scientist. I am using his lecture as an example not because I think either he or the lecture is unusual, but because they are illustrative of the tendency today to submit the child completely to scientific, "psychological" control, without bothering to

consider the philosophical tenets which are at the basis of the psychology. The same doctor had said on a previous occasion "I subscribe fully to the theory of Dr. Gesell* on child development." It would be more to the point if he had said (or could say) first: "I subscribe fully to the doctrines of Christ."

We shall return to his lecture presently, but let us first consider the

Origin of the Child

I was glancing through a magazine once when I caught the words, out of their context I admit, but in any context they would be surprising: "The proud parents believed the child was providential, but the doctors assured them it was an entirely natural conception." It is obvious that the poor author of that sentence doesn't know what "providential" means. He evidently thinks it means extraordinary, miraculous or unnatural. We who know that it means none of these things know also that there is nothing essentially contradictory between the ideas of providence and of nature. The wings of a bird are providential, so are the leaves on a tree. Every child is providential. The fact that his conception is natural, and that God makes use of secondary causes for His creation, does not take it away from the realm of His providence. God, Who directly creates the soul of the child, provides for the making of his body in a way that should fill his parents with awe. Co-creation, however much it can be explained as a natural biological function, is providential.

Purpose of the Child

When we have once established God as the Prime Originator of the child, we can go on to reason correctly as to what is the purpose of the child and what is his destiny. The pediatrician I mentioned above, who was lecturing on how to make the child secure and well-adjusted and a success in life, concluded thusly: "If we do all the things we shall fit the child to take his place in modern society." In this, his last sentence, the doctor made mention of the thing that we must thrash out first. He discussed completely *how* to raise the child. He took for granted that our aim in so doing is to make the child a success in modern society. Is it? That is the question we have to decide. As Christians we know the child is here to know, love and serve God in this world in order to reach his supernatural destiny in the next. If modern society is in harmony with the law of God, if the temporal order today is ordained to the eternal order, and if fellowship with the people of modern society is a preparation for fellowship

* Dr. Gesell is the eminent specialist at the Child Clinic at Yale. He has written many books, including, *The Infant and the Child in the Culture of Today*. Catholics are quite impressed with him.

with the saints, then well and good. Let us train our children to take their place in modern society, and to be a success in it. But if modern society is ordained to the service of man and has no goal outside itself, if fitting into it means learning to ignore God and adore material progress, if being a success in it means taking scandal at the folly of Christ, then why train our children to take their places in it? Whittle down their intellect so that they will be content to know creatures instead of God; constrain their hearts so they will love self, instead of expanding with an infinite love; dwarf their souls so that they can be respectable citizens instead of saints—but make them fit!

The moving picture accompanying the lecture gave an interesting slant on the theory of success. There were two shots shown: one of a discouraged bum, and the other of a successful business man, looking smart but not very Christian. The dialogue informed us that the one had the "right" childhood, the other did not. Without going into what constituted the "right" childhood, we'd like to pose the question of whether it is guaranteed to produce saints as well as executives.

Security and Childhood

It may appear that I am forcibly attempting to admit a lot of "ultimates" into a harmless discussion of child care that never meant to get involved in "deep" things. But our pediatrician could not leave out ultimates from his lecture for the simple reason *that they are there*. And failure to talk about them does not mean they do not exist. The pediatrician maintained that the child—right from infancy—should be made to feel secure, even though (and here, whether he wanted to or not, he is discussing an ultimate thing) there is no reason to feel secure. Of course, this amounts to kidding ourselves, and deceiving our children. "Feel secure even though there's no reason to be." What happens when the child after a few years of "feeling secure" finds there is no prop behind him? Won't he begin to feel very insecure, to say nothing of his obvious mental confusion? If he is at all intelligent, he will want the answers. "Feel secure!"

How can we educate a child properly if we don't know the truth ourselves? There is an answer to this question of security. As Christians we can feel secure because we are secure. Before there was a human father to make his child feel secure there was the paternity of God. And before the first mother made her child content in her arms, there was God Who gave His tenderness. "Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And even if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee." That is the reason we have for making our children feel secure. The providence of God is their security. And children are secure with their parents because the parents are secure with God.

Too often there are women who can forget their children. The doctor who gave this lecture is entrusted with the care of these, since he is on the staff of a hospital for abandoned and neglected babies. What is his, and our, answer to these children? How can we make them feel secure unless we act with the memory of the words of God? "And even if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee." One begins to realize this if one holds an unattractive, smelly, half-witted, abandoned baby in one's arms. There is only one answer. "Yea, the very hairs of your head are numbered." And one can go on to raise the baby in security and love only if one has faith in God.

We should like to note here that we agree with the pediatrician if he meant that modern society can't offer security. It can't. And since he is fitting the child into modern society he can't promise security. But then why expect that mental health will be produced by ignoring facts? And why fit the child into something that will not benefit him? Why not change society to fit his normal mental and moral development?

The Child's Place in the Scheme of Things

The movie we saw opened with the scene of a man and his wife walking into their child specialist's office. They are obviously all in a dither, exceedingly harassed because they think their two-year-old girl is a problem child. (Nature has a way of solving such minor problems.) In the normal course of events, if the parents were having another baby by the time little Sandra was two, they would have something else to worry about, and Sandra on her part would have the benefit of a family, instead of becoming the ever enlarging angle of a triangle. The doctor re-assures the parents that they have done a good job so far, that most important of all they *wanted* the child. Now we agree that it is an important thing both for the child and the parents that they want the child, but we wonder on whose terms they are supposed to want him. It is only too easy to see an implication that if the child is *planned for*, according to paternal designs, he is wanted. For the Christian parent the child's being wanted has a deeper meaning. It means that he is *willed by God*.

It is rather strange that before the child is born, or even conceived the parents have designed the whole thing coolly and with detachment; now that the child is here he is often the center of the universe. Their life moves around him; he is all absorbing. This may seem good on the surface (and it is good only on the surface for basically their self-centered lives have not changed) that the parents should be willing to make sacrifices for the child. But sacrifices can be selfish as well as selfless. (Just as a child's being *wanted* is not always good. C. S. Lewis in *The Great Divorce* gives an example of a mother who wanted

her son so much that she wanted him in hell with her.) It is not a good love that gives a child a false adoration. For it is no compliment to the child to make him a tin god when he is a Son of God. And truly that is what the child becomes at Baptism. He enters the Royal Family of Christ and the Saints.

And that is my complaint: not that children are given too much esteem, but that they are not given esteem enough. This may seem odd when I have already mentioned the super-abundance of child psychology books, and the great interest in child development. What I mean to say is that children deserve a deeper attention, more awesome and filled with reverence. I think that it was Maurice Zundel who said that every mother has the right to think her baby is the most wonderful baby in the world, because there is only the One Baby. It is because of the coming of Christ that a child should be regarded with intense wonder and admiration. For Christ forever gave the child his title of dignity: *of such is the kingdom of heaven*. It is a thing to thank God for. Babies are not given to us just for their sentimental value, or because they are fun to play with. They are a lasting reminder from God that unless we become as little children we shall not enter heaven. That is why we can become bad so easily, sophisticated and hardened to the grace of God, if we don't have children around to keep us *little* and simple.

This, then, is the child's place in the scheme of things. It does not mean that just because the child has "supernatural superiority" or "heavenly priority" (if we can call it that) that he is to rule the home. Like Christ, the child is intended to be subject to his parents, to be trained by their love and wisdom and example, and thus himself advance in "wisdom and age and grace with God and man." With man, too, for the child must be trained to develop his natural talents, to learn the dignity of work, and to find his place in society. I mean in a natural, organic society. There is certainly no compulsion to make him fit into a society foreign to his nature.

The Nature of the Child

This brings us to the consideration of the nature of the child. Child psychology says: "We must not make the child conform to adult standards of truth, generosity and goodness."

Now is the child a different species from man? Or is it not true that his nature is the same, but that his potentialities are undeveloped, his capacities unfulfilled? Indeed Saint Paul said: "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But when I became a man I put away the things of a child." Play is a child's business; it is not man's. A child works in order to learn; a man works in order to earn his living by serving his fellow-man. A



Bringing up father

ENTHUSIASM



d mother.

child's manner, his conduct and approach to things are different from an adult's.

I walked into a settlement house for the first time. Right away a little girl came up to me and said, "We are playing house and I can be the mother." The others agreed. That was that. I was the mother. "When I was a child I thought as a child. . . ."

But this is not to say that the child's nature is essentially different from nor that his ultimate end is not the same as man's. Nor is it to say that "standards of truth, generosity, etc.," are exclusively adult standards. If we say that, we are in danger of implying that these and other moral principles are simply the mores of our society, and not a part of the universal moral law. The Church wisely sets the age of seven years as the general age for the attainment of the use of reason, and for the knowledge of the difference between right and wrong. This carries with it the understanding that even before the age of seven, the child is trained according to those principles of morality whose rightness he himself will assent to when he does reach the age of reason. Really, when we break down this contention of so-called "adult standards" versus "natural moral law known to every normal human being," we come to this conclusion: either we train our children according to the nature God has given them with a realization of their consequent moral responsibility, or we train them according to rules super-imposed on their nature by the particular customs of the day. If this latter is the case, child psychology is ever-changing. And certainly there is no point in training children according to adult standards if these so fluctuate that the child, even by growing fast, could not keep up with them!

Modern child psychology at the same time over-rates and under-rates the child. And we Catholics can fall very easily into the second fault by not perceiving the root error. We find standards of truth and goodness unnatural to the child if we fail to see the natural law operating in him, and *especially* if we fail to take into account the perfection of soul to which he is called as a Christian. We do not expect the child to have the wisdom of Saint Thomas, the love of Saint Teresa, the zeal of Saint Francis Xavier, but we should expect to foster the development of these virtues (according to personal capacity) for the mental and spiritual growth that should come to normal maturity. We have no right to under-rate the child.

At the same time we have no right to over-estimate him. We must do this if we hold that his training can be accomplished without external discipline. We thus forget about original sin and its consequences. Our pediatrician said, "Discipline from within is the best kind." Granted, but let us not forget the "evil from within" left by original sin. And let us remember that we have to curb and correct certain tendencies of the child. Let us not over-rate his goodness.

Christian child psychology is never divorced from revelation. It remembers the supernatural destiny of the child, and the fall of man; gigantic realities; the soul restless until it rests in God—and the triumph of good over evil. Remembering these, it can never accede to a naturalistic psychology no matter how brilliant and valuable it appears. Stealing is a moral problem, not just a bad habit like nailbiting. And that is what Catholic social workers and psychologists find themselves saying under the influence of an "understanding way of dealing with the child's problems.") Masturbation is a moral problem, not a normal stage of sexual development."

We have a grave obligation to children in whatever position we come in contact with them—whether we are their parents, or social workers, or teachers, or doctors. In a way those are terrible words of Our Lord's which He uttered after He told us to permit the little ones to come to Him. He said, "And forbid them not." We have to examine our sciences on that to see whether we pay more attention to the cavities in their teeth than to the weaknesses of their souls, to their physical growth than to their growth in holiness, to their social acceptability than to their status as children of God. There are more ways of forbidding children to go to Him than by ordering churches to be closed down and by teaching children to hate Him. Just because we don't worship the devil, it doesn't mean that we worship God. We can *forbid them* by ignoring God, by just never bothering the children with Him, or by raising the children in complete oblivion of their moral and religious obligations. We can *forbid them* by filling the children "with the cares and pleasures and riches of this life," so that the seed never takes root in their hearts. And we *forbid them* to go to God, if we raise our children according to a child psychology that does not have the impetus of supernatural love.

Train the Child in Holiness

I was in church one day when a little boy about five or six walked up and came up to me and said: "When is God coming out? I want to see Him." We had quite a conversation. But I think what he said made little impression, for after he left me I noticed him standing still watching *all the doors!* The point is, the little boy might have had a very erroneous idea of how God is coming, but he had gotten one extremely important thing. Someone had given him the assurance that *God is good to see.*

If we train our children to realize why they are here and to Whom they are going, we have done a great deal. If we give them an ardent longing for God, then we are one step toward being the parents of saints.

As a social worker I visited Catholic foster homes, and it was apparent that where many of the exceedingly small children baffled

me with their knowledge of radios, record-players, and the mechanics of a car, a great many did not know their prayers. Either the parents were not interested sufficiently in the child's religious training or (and I feel that this was often the case) they felt that the child was too young for religion.

Perhaps he was too young for formal prayers. But that is not the point. The child should grow up with God, just the way he grew up hearing about his grandmother, without understanding exactly the relationship, but knowing that she is very important. Children should know where God fits in if their parents live and act with the conviction that He is the center of their lives.

There was one foster mother who delighted me. She spoke to the three-year-old twins in a marvellous mixture of Irish brogue and "baby talk." When I asked if they knew their prayers, she replied, "Oh, yes. When they go to bed they say, 'Good-night, God. Good night, Holy Mary.'"

When I was a child I prayed as a child. . . .

Then there is Michael, who, because his parents lived in a remote country several miles from Church was taken to Sunday Mass, still when he was only a few months old. When he had just begun to talk, one Sunday, at the Elevation of the Host, he exclaimed, "Praise."

"Out of the mouths of infants and sucklings Thou has perfected praise."

* I don't mean to advocate making God a diminutive. But a child should be encouraged to know God and be intimate with Him. Our Lord said, "Suffer the little ones to come unto Me; for such is the Kingdom of Heaven." God does not mind if they climb on His knee or rumple His garments.

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS



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Bigbury High School

Bigbury High is big—too big. Five thousand children and a hundred and fifty teachers under one roof, with a turnover of ten per cent of each every five months. During several weeks at the beginning of their course, freshmen are given daily instruction to "orient" them to the intricacies of the building, the course of study, the administrative set-up. Classes are large, running to thirty-nine or forty; teachers handle some two hundred pupils for instruction in a day, and as many more for supervision in the lunchroom or study hall.

It takes almost a month at the beginning of every term to organize the monster; then, in the third month, program planning for the next term gets under way; and half of the fifth month goes into breakup of the organization. Then come commencements; half a thousand children graduate; since the school building cannot house the ceremony, the most palatial movie house in the country is hired. It is difficult, when the size of the whole is such a factor, for teachers to know one another, or for teachers to know the children—or for teachers to teach.

Closely related to its bigness is the school's mass-production system. Joseph Lancaster a century and a half ago founded schools for the poor in which, he said, one teacher, aided by child monitors, could instruct a thousand children. His motive was good—to make it possible to offer education to every child; but he made the mistake of trying to apply the big fad of his day, the Industrial Revolution, to the development of human beings. His system was efficient, mechanized—and cheap. This same Lancaster was the great-godfather of all the Bigbury Highs of today. Paid teachers have been substituted for monitors; the graded classes were separated first by folding doors, then by walls; to Lancaster's elementary grades were added secondary schools; but the idea that human beings could be made to pattern, like yards of calico, remained.

The very architecture of Bigbury High suggests a factory. It is a huge, square, red brick building; from the cement playground to the flat roof unadorned, uninspired, and uninspiring. It can be distinguished from a modern breakfast-food factory by the size and set of its windows.

The routine prescribed for teachers at Bigbury High would please the most modern industrial efficiency expert. By contrast, imagine Socrates in the market-place; Aristotle tutoring Alexander; the medieval artist-craftsman-teacher with his pupils living and learning under the same roof with him; the Greatest of All Teachers speaking to His followers on hillsides and in the Temple;—and then picture the modern Bigbury teacher, with five batches of thirty-nine pupils each trooping

in and out of a classroom at the sound of a bell, and a new and constant, mechanically assembled "pupil load" of one hundred ninety coming in every five months.

From the time she punches the time-clock at eight-forty in the morning until the time she punches the time-clock at three in the noon, the teacher at Bigbury High hardly has a moment in which to say "Help me!" to her Guardian Angel. First thing in the morning she finds in her pigeon hole a half dozen "cut slips"; three or four sheets closely mimeographed, of instruction for making out new record B39; two pages of ideas on pedagogy from an administrative office; a sheet of excerpts on civil rights; and a brochure on the use of school savings banks. Clutching these in her fist and a roll of paper under her arm, she rushes to the room, or the patch of cafeteria space allotted to her official class. There, in seventeen minutes, she greets thirty-eight children, signifies their presence on a class attendance sheet and on thirty-eight individual roll cards, fills out four latecomer cards in quadruplicate, checks on the appearance at detention of yesterday's two latecomers, reads the day's announcements, interviews the pupils named in the cut slips and makes a notation on each, supervises the changing of the wardrobe, asks for a show of hands on Form 71S; maintains strict silence while the loud speaker booms out the results of last night's track meet and reminds everyone that ten teachers have not yet had their names in Form 19BF2; and then, as a gong sounds, calls to Susannah in the back of the room to inquire if her mother is feeling any better. Obviously, all of these chores, some of them of vital concern, cannot be handled directly in so short a time by one harried teacher; they must therefore be run through in the most perfunctory, routine manner.

In brief, a conscientious teacher's day is one of frustration from the very start; but she has to grin and forget it, for a class is waiting two flights up; therefore she sweeps an armload of books and papers from her desk and dashes for the crowd on the stairway. Then, for the teaching of thirty-nine pupils, a forty-minute period punctuated by the arrivals of a pupil whose program has just been changed and a messenger requesting of the teacher a benevolent dollar for a cause approved by the department office; then downstairs to supervise the hundred children in an auditorium study hall; then upstairs to another thirty-nine pupils; and so on to the final bell.

Talk of your factory belt system!

Most teachers, under such a program, cannot let themselves sink below the surface of their students; it is better to remain impersonal or to act a part, than to open up a pupil-teacher relationship which they have neither the time nor the place nor the energy to carry beyond a breach. The routine becomes both a prison and a protection. An interested child wishing to ask Miss Jones a question at the close

od must either tag her as she flees for the elevator or be swept by the need to get to his next class in three minutes; usually, however, the children at Bigbury are packing their books and plotting dash to the cafeteria while Teacher is summing up. Extracurricular activities, which can be a most vital feature of high school life, are treated upon as scab labor by teachers whose regular day has been an impossible farce of overactivity.

Recently a pupil returned for three or four successive days to a main teacher for criticism of an editorial he was writing. The subject was an important one and the boy's style was sufficiently promising to warrant help; and the piece showed growth in understanding and power after each rewriting. But at last Mr. S. remarked, "Ben, why do you keep coming back with this? It is too late now, anyway, to use it on the school paper."

"To tell you the truth," replied Ben, "I've learned more from these talks with you than from a whole term's English work."

"And I wanted to say to him," Mr. S. confided to his colleagues, "that I had gained more of the satisfaction of teaching from those same talks than from a whole term's instruction of five classes. But what could it have done?"

The spotlight at Bigbury is one class activity, from which it is hoped the individual child is absorbing education. But really you can never be sure what he learns.

In the Name of Progress

The knowledge, sifted into the heads of the education boards in the course of a century and a half, that machine-made education is not the last word, has caused an effort to *individualize* education at Bigbury chiefly by making mechanical provision for individual differences. There is an endless variety of courses, from remedial reading to speech clinic, from home arts to wood shop to radio-script writing—"a course to fit every mentality." And within these courses teachers are urged to teach not subject-matter but children, on the fatuous notion that an instructor, facing five classes of thirty-nine children for forty minutes each class daily, can know the needs, the state of culture, the background, and the rate of advancement of each, and lead each individually along his own private road to wisdom.

This demand for non-routine teaching in a routine set-up, and the impossibility of meeting it, only increases the teacher's sense of futility. The new techniques, under which the children learn by doing and often merely by growing, were worked out with small classes in select neighborhoods under teachers whose sense of importance was at the moment enhanced by the many wise eyes focused on their experiments. In some of the very areas in which, with much fanfare, they were proven feasible, they have since been quietly abandoned. In large education mills

like ours, the result of applying the new techniques has been a learning and general chaos. If you have to teach in a factory, you to use mass teaching methods—drill, homework, tests, lectures, motions, with required pupil attention; otherwise both pupil and teacher lose even the limited sense of achievement that is possible under a mechanical a set-up. And I am not so sure that those same methods utilizing artificial repetition, which are used in teaching a boy to walk to swim smoothly, to play the violin, will not also be needed in the future when public education again becomes more of an individual process.

As a result of the effort to use informal methods in a mass-education set-up, the brighter, potentially more educable children at Bigbury are left to their own devices, and do not learn all they could, the system being generally geared to the less studious. It is like an office in which the executives wait on the slowest typist; like a belt system in which a dawdling worker deranges the entire process. It is still factory production, but with a low efficiency quotient.

Our pupils at Bigbury are glib, inaccurate, poorly informed and opinionated. This fact causes the more earnest teachers to feel thwarted and ineffectual; but teachers who are "on the beam" realize that, in the administration, it is more important for them to fall in with the demands of organization routine than to worry about the imparting of wisdom.

Altogether, factory method or no, a carefree atmosphere envelops the children. The teachers do not yell, the supervisors seldom scold and no child ever weeps during a test. The faculty have learned that it is pleasanter to overlook laziness and the infraction of rules than to enforce penalties. The students have learned that, using the right approach to the right person, anything goes. In the halls, they run and shove; in the lunchroom, they scatter garbage and tip back chairs; because of the lack of tension, no one ever seems to get hurt. If a boy walks out of the building at nine-thirty in the morning and doesn't return for classes, he is following a natural boyish impulse and should not be worried about as much as the pupil who obeys the regulations and may well, in the opinion of the authorities, become a psychopath subject later on. "An up-to-date, progressive school," commented a local school inspector. "A bear-garden," cried an exchange teacher from England. A bear-garden, with five thousand amiable, bumbling bears.

The graduates of Bigbury High get along tolerably well. Teachers and employers complain that they can't spell; their customers complain that they can't add; the colleges complain that they can't think; but, the same outcries are heard against the graduates of dozens of other Bigbury Highs. Personality, naive assurance, and an amiable aggressiveness make up for many failings. The Bigbury alumni are absorbed

little stir into the mass of mediocre, inoffensive, restless, money-
ing, pleasure-seeking citizens who stock our urban centers. As long
they have easy employment, good pay, well-intentioned leaders, and
in the land, they slide along in the groove.

The House Divided

Over and above its unwieldy size and its progressive-factory set-
Bigbury High has a third, and much more serious weakness: it has
come to grips with reality; it does not offer to its faculty, and through
to its students, a sound, workable philosophy of learning and liv-
Some of the wheels of the factory go clockwise, others counter-
wise; and in among them a great many human values are jangled
out.

Bigbury High carries its students through their years of adolescence
the precious, formative period of idealism, the time in which the
lader life patterns are irrevocably laid out. Yet it never really gets
on to fundamentals with its eager thousands, unless it be to negate
them. Philosophically, it is a house shattered to fragments. Its faculty
so deeply divided on the basic issues that, for the sake of the osten-
tious comradery, these questions are generally ignored; and when a
student problem involving principle must be solved, it is usually settled
according to the unmoral philosophy prevailing in our day.

There are several areas in which this immobilizing dichotomy of
as at Bigbury High is most evident.

Let us take, for example, the question of the function of the
teacher. Many a man and woman who has gone into, and persevered in,
profession, skilled in the techniques of instruction and sustained
the importance of imparting knowledge and wisdom to the young,
is run afoul of the new philosophy of education, in which the pupils
are expected to learn through discussion and other more tangible forms
of activity. The more modern supervisors do not want the teacher to
teach; she should merely stimulate the children to self-learning. A
faculty member at Bigbury, who taught her classes the facts of an im-
portant period in American history, was criticized for her "teacher-
dominated" lesson. The best classes are considered to be those in which
the pupils spout and shout as at a revival meeting. An opinion is con-
sidered good because it emanates from a child, even when it has not a
basis of truth in adequate factual substantiation and sound reasoning.
Thus the teacher, who has knowledge, must quench his fire and let the
children, who have it not, flounder in its quest; or he must take the
false position of pretending to let them learn for themselves while he
subtly guides them to the conclusions socially desired.

Inability or unwillingness to take on this Protean character has
caused several Bigbury teachers to retire before their time, and has be-

wildered and disheartened many others.

Miss L., who teaches in an elementary school that feeds Bigbury High, stated: "The activity program started me on the road to becoming a Catholic."

Pressed for an explanation, she went on: "I saw that letting children initiate projects and make decisions could become dangerous if the group leaders had gangster tendencies. The need for normalcy maintained by authority therefore became nakedly clear; yet only in Catholicism could I find support for absolute standards."

Can you imagine the Greatest Teacher of All sitting watch on a hillside while His followers argued among themselves on a subject such as, "What must we do to be saved?" or "Who is my neighbor?" At Bigbury, that is what would be expected of Him.

A second, closely related area where philosophies at Bigbury differ is that of the relationship of students to one another. Does the child go to school to acquire knowledge, to develop his personal abilities and character, and to learn to save his soul, or does he go for practical training, to adapting himself to a group? All sides agree that man is by nature a social creature; the point at issue is, how far shall the social habits be fostered to the exclusion of individual privacy?

The advanced thinkers of Bigbury High do not believe in reticence. Their ideal, well-adapted child likes to be with others, not only in recreation and interchange of ideas, but all the time. He talks freely on all subjects, no matter how limited his experience with them, on the theory that by talking he will learn, or on the even more modern theory that his opinion, because it is his, is valuable and therefore should be expressed and made to count. He is a good sport, going to the games, the dances, and getting elected to office; showing his "school spirit" by floating with the crowd. He does better in class work than on tests, particularly in the social science subjects and English, while his glib tongue and his lack of intellectual inhibitions are assets.

The child who wants to retain his privacy is on the defensive. Suppose the topic for discussion is "How to Improve Relations between America and Russia," and he does not feel that he or any other member of his class (except the non-participating teacher) has enough information to handle the topic intelligently. Or suppose the subject is English and the topic "Things I Am Afraid Of," or "My Ideal Husband" or "My Parents and I Disagree." Teacher, it seems, finds psychiatric questions interesting, and believes that their discussion will relieve the spirits of his pupils. But sensitive Mary does not see that her inner family life is any of his business, or any concern of the thirty-eight other boys and girls. If she is clever, she will feign a situation not related to the topic; if she is more heavy-witted, she will be decidedly in the wrong on this assignment.

Also, the Joe Student who likes to take what the teachers have given him and then go forth to finish his day's education in the public library or the basement laboratory is considered queer, unless he drags a few like-minded lads with him wherever he goes. Efforts are made by teachers and classmates to break down his reserve, to "loosen him up" to make him conform to the carefree group norm. Yet from such efforts, if they were not made to feel that concentration is mentally and emotionally dangerous, might come the contributors to art, science, philosophy, and statesmanship for whom America has been hungry.

This invasion of and battering at the quiet corners of the personality is carried on in the name of group harmony—the elimination of divisive differences. Tolerance, it is called; the development of a pliancy in which nothing is taken seriously enough to be hugged to the individual heart, in which every child swims happily in his mental bowl with thirty-eight pairs of eyes constantly peering in at him.

Some of the faculty at Bigbury think that this emphasis on group activity and on adaptation to the crowd goes too far. It encourages rampant familiarity among students rather than respect and understanding. It is an indirect endorsement of mob rule, and will tend to make the children the readier victims of totalitarian propagandists and demagogues. It is carried on, to be sure, in the name of democracy; but in the American democracy, early town meeting style, the citizens met to discuss problems on which they had investigated, talked, and thought in advance, and which they were old enough and mature enough to handle, while in American democracy, representative style, the voters choose more experienced men to study and decide on matters for which they themselves have not the time nor the necessary background. But our education at Bigbury generally fails to distinguish between a raw opinion and a sound conclusion; between a person competent to discuss a problem and one who is not; between a subject fit for open discussion and one unsuited. The more spontaneous emanation is given the greater glory, particularly if it comes forth with vigor and is expressed with an eye to group approval.

Another area of disagreement concerns the relative importance of physical and mental development; but the proponents of the mind are so completely overshadowed that this question seldom sees the light of argument. A child is excluded from classes for physical but not for moral contagion. Health education is the only course which he is required by state law to take regularly during his entire stay at school. Teachers who coach athletic teams are the only ones who are paid extra for their extra-curricular service, and therefore receive more remuneration than teachers with equal length of service whose subjects are mathematics or science or world literature. Boys who are good football

players or track stars have their choice of college scholarships; who are merely good students may not be admitted to higher institutions of learning at all. If a candidate for graduation from Bigbury is failing in history, pressure will be brought against the teacher to give a passing mark; but if the same lad has not brought in a satisfactory dental record, he will not graduate. "Health habits" is one of the four primary standards on which all teachers must rate all their students at Bigbury; truthfulness and integrity do not appear even on an optional, secondary list.

The vision of the good life, to most pupils, means little more than skiing in winter, sunshine in California and Florida, summer sports at a beach resort—a fine body and tough, sun-tanned skin. At Bigbury they have altered the classic "sound mind in a sound body" adage—this setting is cherished without the diamond.

On sex matters there is also a wide divergence of principle at Bigbury. What some might call delinquency among students would be condoned by many modern intellectuals on the ground that the sex impulse, like other natural urges, becomes toxic to the personality when long repressed and is therefore best given an outlet. Although it is an important matter for adolescents, this subject has in general been neglected by the community as the concern of home and church; it has gained official entry to the school curriculum only through the course in biology and hygiene. But it has many unofficial ports of entry through "discussion periods" in the social studies, for example. It is usually those with the advanced, pseudo-Freudian views who insist on bringing it in.

This pseudo-Freudianism is also behind much of the practice of educational psychology. A girl who is established by the mechanical personality tests as timid may have not only her private life, but that of her parents probed. A teen-age boy who has yielded to his masculine urge may worry the psychologist not because of his sin, but because of his ensuing sense of guilt. A case history printed in an authoritative volume on "momism" in the faculty library rejoices that "R. had a normal sex life since he was twenty-one. . . . He had had intercourse two or three times a month. . . . R. was married at the age of twenty-four." The much-discussed Kinsey report seems to show that a large percentage of our more highly educated non-Catholic males of today do not hold by the Judaeo-Christian traditions of chastity. It is not natural, therefore, to find this falling-away reflected in the thought of modern educators.

The Norm Is Chaos

Basically, the ideological split at Bigbury is over the question of standards. This split shows up in the purposes of teaching, in the approach to class work, the techniques; and in the training (or lack of

the pupils receive. It effectively prevents adolescent pupils from getting a sense of security in their school life.

All agree on one thing—the importance of kindness. Beyond those who follow the mechanistic interpretation of man and his course believe in putting the children into situations in which they develop, by some force within them and without direct teacher interference, into fine specimens with smooth, nerveless, well-integrated personalities. Those who believe in truth, in the conscious approach toward perfection, want the teachers to instruct the children fully and to direct and inspire them to become intelligent, self-confident adults with integrity of character. It is the mechanists who are in the saddle at Bigbury—just as they are in most of the secular centers of thought in our world today.

A generation ago we heard much in the schools about character training; today, the educational palaver is all about attitudes. Moral and intellectual honesty, dealing as they do with fixed principles and verified facts and straight thinking, are looked down upon as too cumbersome for the common child and too naive for the clever one. A frame of mind is easy to induce by methods of mass propaganda and psychology; and when everyone has the same frame of mind it is easy to live with, although it may lead whole communities or whole nations into serious error. But character training is an individual matter and comes hard; moreover, it is premised on the ability of the human person, by effort of will, to surmount difficulties and resist temptations; for this premise the mechanists hesitate to grant.

The attitudes in vogue at Bigbury High today are tolerance and brotherhood; during the war the favorite was intolerance for the intolerance of the Nazis. Now brotherhood, we all agree, is a wonderful attitude; so wonderful that many of us wish it could be more than skin-deep. We have seen, during the 1930's, the one-and-the-same administrator act as chairman, in turn, of the pacifist committee; the committee against intolerance; the committee to keep America neutral; and the committee to further the war effort. We have heard expressions of indignation against all religious persecutions except the persecution of Catholics in Mexico, the executions of religious by the Spanish royalists, and the enslavement of millions for their faith by the post-war Russians.

We think brotherhood is so wonderful that it should not merely be conjured up at a moment's notice to fit a given situation and then shelved for future reference. It should be more than an attitude, more than a garment which the youngsters put on because we have left it lying around everywhere, to be exchanged for another garment that has been left lying around everywhere when the political scene changes.

It should be rooted in character and morals and religion—in the of men and women who take the Golden Rule as an absolute principle and who see all men as their brothers because they have a common Father, a common human nature, and a common destiny of living lives well and thus saving their souls. But such a sweeping, unassailable concept of brotherhood requires a belief in absolutes, in fundamentals external to the whim of man; and the mechanists, deeming these as too static, settle for more conveniently donned "attitudes."

In regard to individual qualities, the mobile traits are also more generally prized at Bigbury. Adaptability rates much higher than honesty, which is considered a bourgeois, puritanical quality unsuitable for the stupid slaves of capitalism. Because of the changing standards, and because of the great value placed on fitting in, our students become adept at figuring out what teacher wants, what is the spot of a particular administrator, how little effort will satisfy the requirements, what is the advantageous remark to make in a discussion, and how to play one authority against another to the students' advantage.

It is difficult to know what the students really think or feel on because their personalities are as responsive as thermometers to the social weather, and what they have of character is a sediment deep at the bottom of the container. They are restless, cynical, over-active, and afraid of concentrated effort. This is to be expected of children who cannot help sensing that their teachers are at odds on all the fundamentals, and who profess that there is no truth. Farewell, then, to dear ideals of youth!

If a child is guilty of serious misbehaviour (and it has to be proved bad to gain official notice at Bigbury), it is a toss-up whether the charge of his not having conducted himself as a responsible being will be meted out squarely. If the case goes to one of the mechanists—which category includes most of our guidance specialists—efforts will be made to win his confidence by giving credence to his tales of being misunderstood by the complaining teacher or by granting him privileges around the school which the nicer children do not have. Then, his cooperation having been won, his circumstances will be probed in an effort to find some cause external to himself for his unsocial attitude. Usually some excuse for the child's aberrations is found; he is given a pat on the back, a compensating favor, and the assurance that he is dear to the expert's heart. Then he goes forth, his frailty of character untouched or perhaps increased by the growing awareness that at Bigbury "crime" pays dividends.

If a child cheats on a test, the chances are that it will be decided that his teacher was too meticulously demanding. A few weeks later a girl was found shouting down the corridor at Bigbury while claiming

in session. She claimed to be on an errand for a teacher, but investigation showed she was cutting. The experts decided this girl merely high-strung because of the impending end of the term and accompanying Senior activities. The payoff—the girl in question—with jubilant malice back to the teacher who had reported her: “You don’t know how to handle a person of my temperament. You should study some psychology!”

A report in the faculty library, by a well-known school superintendent, tells of Linda, who used to pinch other girls and spoil their work while they were doing arithmetic at the board. Here it was decided according to the new look in education, that Linda needed a more civilized form of class procedure; and the teacher thereupon changed methods. We wonder about the twenty-nine girls who did not pinch!

The subject is a complex one, enmeshing not only Bigbury High, our city’s entire social system, and the whole field of education, life itself. During the process of trial and error, form and reform, while cutting down our modern idol *bigness* to life-size, the question goes on and on, “But what of the children?”

U. G. YAGER



FIRST AMENDMENT

Their souls? We may not train their souls;
That argument is ended.
But let's not be disconsolate,
For look! Their teeth are splendid!

Sr. St. Francis, S.S.J.

The Family Militant

The Kinsey Report (and reports on the Kinsey Report) has a shock to a lot of us. This concrete evidence of the degrading to which family life has sunk, plus the evidence of our own ears and eyes, might justify the following speculation about some future man-woman relationship:

John met Mary three years ago in the summer of 1950. She was a cute thing and he began dating her. He found Mary delightful, accessible, not one of those prudes of the early Forties who postponed intimacies until after the wedding ceremony. Mary had had plenty of experience before meeting John, but somehow John was right down her groove. Maybe this might be the real thing and more than a casual love affair like the others—Bob, the kid from Center High School, who was so timid and frightened; Jim, the guy who worked at the desk, who was tired of his wife and kids; then Harry—well, Harry didn't count, how else was she to get that promotion? But John was different. John and Mary were married in Saint Thomas' Church. It gave such pleasure to their folks. It was a nice idea, too, and it gave a perfect excuse for a party for the gang. Among their wedding presents was a wonderfully useful one, a sort of symbol of their life together: a contraceptive kit. Of course, everyone understood that this was a trial run, but John and Mary had known each other for years; their marriage might last. It would be nice to settle down, to have a permanent apartment and regular meals, to have a companion. Anyway, they were both free. Whenever John went on his sales trip to the city, Mary told him to have a good time but to be discriminating. She was a grand girl, so understanding!

What if I were to tell you that this is not a projection into the future but into our own time, 1948, our own society, the Western world? What if I were to tell you that this was a typical case, duplicated thousands of times in one of our civilization's biggest metropolises? That this experience is one of a working couple. A spade is called a spade without the polite bourgeois camouflage of "divorcee" and "escort." For the upper-money brackets of society, a child doesn't mean so much of a cut in one's standard of living as a bore, a bothersome thing. To a worker, a child means a still more crowded apartment, noise, smells, worry—and who is to take care of it while the parents work? Better not have any!

Providentially, this attack on the family has stimulated a tremendous response. Grace rushed into the gap and the apostles of the family are coming forward, just as militant intellectuals came forward at the time of Modernism. The Christian family has been rediscovered and has become a key part of the Catholic renaissance. Grace

abundant that not only are families being preserved but families become militant and apostolic as families. The family apostolate born.

This rediscovery of the family as the chief means of sanctification of most men has led to a whole spirituality of the family in which the tasks of cooking and cleaning and working have their chapter as well as the relationships of husband and wife and the vocation of the family to the apostolate.

The rediscovery of the dignity of the family, of its magnificent role as founder of society, of its deep love analogous to Christ's love for the Church, of its sanctity, has given everyday tasks quite a new look. The Christian wife understands that clean linen, well-cooked meals, a neat house, are her works of sanctity just as formal prayers are the monk's. She realizes that a smile in the morning is as holy as an ejaculation, and that a tired back from marketing is as good an offering as a treasury. The Christian husband sees that helping his wife wash the dishes, or doing that bit of repairing is his way to holiness, that patience and considerateness at home are not merely "the thing to do" but definite parts of a husband's spirituality. The pay check means more than groceries for the week, but the fulfillment of part of his duty to assure the security of his family (there are other securities besides financial). The Christian husband must see to: the integrity of the family, of its love, of its respected place in society, etc.). Little by little the young Christian couple understand their duty to think as a family in allocating money, in making decisions and so forth because they are responsible to God as a family.

The family's spirituality reaches a much deeper stage when the couple discovers their duty to penetrate deeper, to understand each other more, to put in common their state of souls, their thoughts, their acts, and acting for their transformation and sanctification. Young couples, realizing that there can be no thought of sanctification as individuals but only together as a family, starting for the same ideal, find it necessary to arrive at as close a union of souls as of flesh. Prudishness about one's interior life is as shallow as prudishness about the marital act. The dedication of the family to God demands that each partner know the state of the other's soul in order to help, to encourage, to correct. The Christian desires his partner's sanctification as the fruit of their love, as the result of the grace of marriage.

The pooling of ideas acts as a check and as a unifier; as a check inasmuch as the knowledge of her husband's loving interest helps the wife overcome her laziness, just as his wife's love helps the husband withstand the office flirt; as a unifier all through the day despite the two's divergent paths. The wife's keener sensibilities may help her husband see what is the basis of the neighboring families' difficulties, while the

husband's courage and strength may carry his wife through a particularly difficult task. Working as a team, as a family for the Kingdom of God, learning to see with a Christian's eyes, to help with Christian disinterestedness, the family becomes united, becomes Christian.

The family takes on a personality as we can see from this examination of conscience for a young family (taken from a French pamphlet on lay spirituality by Godin):

- 1) Do we really try to love God as a family, to pay Him homage, to pray to Him as a family?
- 2) Do we try often in our conversations to find what God expects of our family, the special task He has given us to do?
- 3) Is our family a truly Christian one, where we believe together, where together we live the magnificent reality of the inner life?
- 4) Is our family obedient as a family?—really submissive to God and ready for anything that He may desire? By making family plans do we think about the will of God?
- 5) When we desire children, is it to give them to the Kingdom of God or is it for our own pleasure?
- 6) Is God's law known and understood in our family? Do we meditate enough in prayer and humility to understand "it should be this way?"
- 7) Is the spirit of Christ, of charity, love and devotion, of confidence and abandon, of poverty, really in our home? Would Christ be at home in our inmost thoughts?
- 8) Does our family try to bring divine life into all things material and human, thus realizing its vocation of incarnation?
- 9) Does our family interest itself in the things about it, its neighborhood, politics, the ideas current in society?
- 10) Does our family work for the redemption of others? Does it realize the value of suffering to redeem our brothers?
- 11) Is our family sufficiently apostolic?

On this last point there are several things to consider when thinking about the family's apostolic vocation. First of all, there is the providential aspect of the family's being in a certain neighborhood with certain friends, with certain gifts, made up of these two people and not others. The guiding principle is to use all the talents of the family, to do the apostolate which that particular family can best do: a professional's family among other professionals, a farmer's family among other farm families. The other principle helping to determine the vocation of the family is the needs of others. The times may call for a social action rather than an intellectual one. The root trouble of the neighborhood may be general insecurity due to seasonal jobs or racial prejudice. The family's action during a depression will be

from that in good times, etc.

The apostolate of the family, as indeed all apostolates, has two parts, the personal, and the institutional. The personal, where Christ is through the apostle who strives to say, "I live now, not I, but it liveth in me." It is a personal witness to the confident joy of Christians, that joy which is neither sentimental nor in the clouds.

But witness to whom? First of all to other Christian families who are less fervent, who don't know how to use their lives for God, to transform these families into co-apostles. There is the witness of engagement to those families who, having seen a magnificent example of Christian love, will strive to live at least a minimum of Christianity. There is the witness to the pagan who is searching for truth, for an example that he can build on, who can see the grandeur of Christ in the Christian family's disinterestedness and in the depth of its love of others. Finally, there is the witness to the men who no longer believe in purity, who don't think that it is possible.

But witness how? First of all by simplicity, by letting others see that your family is like, imperfections and all. Your fight against hypocrisy is an excellent witness; it is good for others to realize that Christians are human, too, with the difficulties of ordinary human behavior. Witness by showing people the place of Christ in your family, not regarding these deeper things as "our private business"; witness of love to the natural communities around you. Our Lord says to the family:

WAS HUNGRY . . .

I was that Jones family who didn't know how to love deeply, as Christians, and you didn't show them, because you were bored with superficial differences and you didn't try to overcome these differences so that the Joneses could have understood what you had to tell them, what your vocation is to tell.

WAS THIRSTY . . .

I was that Brown family down the block you avoided because they had "radical ideas." That family was searching for an ideal and you didn't share yours with them.

WAS NAKED . . .

I was in that Lecour family with a beautiful human love. You thought that the Lecours were "fast." You didn't come and clothe their love with grace. You didn't adorn and enrich their love.

WAS A PRISONER . . .

I was that Kelly family. Sure, they were social climbers, and imprisoned by the fashions and customs of the world. You didn't free them from that slavery of "keeping up with the crowd" or "doing what everyone else is doing."

I WAS WEAK AND WITHOUT DEFENSE . . .

I was that young family two flights down. You didn't even know their name, yet you could have saved them from the paganism of the day—birth control, divorce. You were indifferent to the murder of that family.

In the strong phrase of Abbe Godin, "the happy family is indifferent to others through egoism or self-love, constructs its misery, on the corpses of those who were not given life by it. . . . They are rich, terribly rich. In gratitude and justice you must share their joy." There are great benefits to this sharing. You will find families who need you, but you will also find those who will help you. You will find that your problems are shared by others, have been shared and solved by others. You will find out how your family can be improved, what can be added to your home life. Thanking God for His gifts to you, you will be less severe in judging.

But the young Christian family has not only the work of sharing as a witness. They must also help directly. They, like most young couples, have many friends who are engaged. Enjoying the advantages of experiences, they can help these young fiancés prepare themselves seriously and realistically for marriage. Their influence on their engaged friends can be of the greatest help to them and their influence with them is far greater than that of most priests.

Then there is your influence on the neighborhood, at the office. The young housewife has so many contacts, at the neighborhood store, at the school, in the park. She soon becomes well known and accepted by all. It will be comparatively easy for her to find out the worries of her neighbors, of ways in which they need help. Offering her service, watching her neighbor's child, running an errand for an old lady next door, she can bring the love of Christ close to her neighbor. So, too, her husband continues their apostolate at work. Sharing in his love, he can help the younger members of the office. He can exert an influence on the side of decency, exerting an influence as a family man.

When the husband and wife bring together their day's apostolate, they will be able to encourage and help each other. Their life in Christ is deepened by this apostolate, the fruit of their love. This apostolate is a strong barrier against laziness and egoism—demanding, it makes the two grow by sacrifices (late hours, patience with those who can't see). But soon the young Christian family will discover that there are some problems affecting the neighborhood that they cannot solve alone or in an intermittent fashion. These problems, the quality of the local school, inadequate housing, exorbitant prices at neighborhood stores, certain customs such as the Saturday night drinking party

restrictive covenants, can only be solved by getting other families to rate. The institutional apostolate is born.

Together with a few other families who are interested in the same, the young Christian family studies all phases of each difficulty.

The local school's poor caliber may be due to low pay for teachers, a political school board, poor physical facilities or a combination of all three. Once the group understands the elements of the problem, it will evolve some plan of action: it may be a petition to the teachers' salaries, to require that teachers continue their professional studies; it may be a campaign to put a competent person on the school board; it may be through getting the state to build a better school. The Saturday night drinking party may be a major problem. The elements are the need for relaxation after a hard week's work, imitation of other communities' customs; the difficulty may lie in the person who leads the neighborhood. Here the group may try to have a dry party where few drinks are served; they may have to build local community spirit; they may have to change the clique's dominance, either by changing the ideas of some of the members of that clique or by getting another group to become active.

By thus getting other families interested in the service of others, the solution of local problems, the Christian family is preparing the way of grace. The joy of serving others is one step on the way of understanding true charity. Sturdy independence in handling local problems not only resists the ever-increasing trend toward a relentless centralization, but it gets across the idea of our responsibility for one another. The Christian family by its disinterestedness, by its willingness to work hard and long, by its confidence when things are tough, has the best possible chance to show Christianity as a strong, virile love for one's neighbor. This is the best possible answer to charges of superstition, of a closed clique, of isolationism. As the strongest in love, the Christian family is the natural transformer of the group from something like a philanthropic association to a living community, strong in solidarity and friendship. The Christian family has the joy of being like the Baptist, making straight the way of the Lord.

As groups of families interested in local problems grow, the problems to be tackled increase in size. In France where the MPF (*Mouvement Populaire des Familles*) groups several thousand families, they have been able to undertake housing surveys of whole towns and on the basis of facts gotten from these surveys have been able to petition for better housing. These petitions are not just vague generalities but lay down concrete requirements for adequate family housing, complete with suggested plans, financing schemes, etc. They have undertaken similar surveys on juvenile delinquency and food distribution.

Through a gradual rebirth of real, practical community in these local groups have been able to begin a rebirth of the ideal service, of communal independence, of decentralization. They lifted up the level of family life one notch nearer to the Christian way of life. Little by little the ground is being prepared for the Sower's fecund seeds of grace.

SALLY WHELAN CASSIDY

BOOK REVIEWS

The True Psychology

THE IMAGE OF HIS MAKER

By Robert Edward Brennan, O.P.
Bruce, \$3.25

The only sound basis for the study of man is the rational psychology of Thomas Aquinas based on Aristotelian foundations. Nearly all modern psychological studies by-pass this

ancient wisdom in favor of some half-baked conjecture thought up yesterday by a professor or a psychologist ignorant of the past. Much, too, of modern so-called psychology is trivia or garnished physiology, or solemnly distorted common sense; or else it is Freudian, which is a sort of modern perverse attempt to get a framework of study such as Aristotle gave us. It can be said, categorically, that no true and great advance will be made in psychology except on the solid basis of Saint Thomas. Hence it is very important to study rational psychology and this is done increasingly in Catholic schools. The material is in the *Summa*. It is also in Father Brennan's earlier book, *Rational Psychology*, which is the text used by most colleges. But that was a scholarly book, in strictly philosophical and technical language, and was really difficult. *Image of His Maker* is rational psychology simplified and, so to speak, brought up-to-date, synchronized with the latest in scientific study and presented against a background of modern philosophical and psychological thought. This is most welcome; seldom was a book so needed, and it is remarkably well done. The simplification has been possible only because of Father Brennan's profound understanding of his subject. He has concentrated on essentials and has gone straight to the heart of each subject. This book is not a textbook, but probably will be used as such by some schools and certainly the ordinary reader will find it necessary to study it, rather than just to read it, even though the text flows and no special academic training is presupposed. Since it is not a large book (only three hundred and some pages) it cannot be exhaustive in any way. It gives the high points, properly related to each other and to the modern world. It should be an introduction for many to rational psychology and should lead them on to the *Summa*, where they will get the full picture from which they can begin working on some of the great modern problems of psychology.

PETER MICHAELS

CISTERCIAN CONTEMPLATIVES

the Monks of Our Lady of Gethsemani
Trappist, Kentucky, 75¢

For a fellow active in the lay apostolate to recommend literature conducive to a Trappist vocation seems very much like cutting his own

There are so few laymen willing to take a share in the tremendous to be done in the market places that, the feeling of congratulation directed to the boys who take to the cloister is one not unmixed with regret. This paper-bound booklet, beautifully printed and illustrated with photographs taken at Gethsemani Abbey, will clear up many a doubt about the place the Trappist occupies in that economy of salvation in which we all participate.

Until we can understand and appreciate the ends, means and spirit of the Cistercian life, we'll be that much short of knowing the meaning of Christian life. The Cistercian monks are the white and chastened fingers of mankind reaching out to touch the hand of God. All of mankind is called to share this life with God, and those who answer the call immediately with a simple "Yes, Lord," and seek this end with a singleness of purpose, bring all of us that are nearer to God, even though we have been assigned the lesser part. The corporate body of mankind is constantly in debt to those few men who fulfill the highest function in the terrestrial sphere. We could walk with little certainty in contact with the world if we were not sure that the right hand of the Church lay passively nestled in the paternal hand of God.

This booklet breathes the spirit of Trappist life. It dispels quietly the anxiety that the monks have forsaken the world, if by that statement is implied anything of distaste or disgust for those they leave behind. Much as Christ was on Ascension Day so that the Holy Ghost might come and dwell with the monks who love us cast a wall about themselves so that they might not be disturbed in the act of calling down God's blessings upon us.

All that is humanly beautiful in the collective pronoun *we*, plus the added glory of a *we* that includes an incarnate Christ, is manifested every hour of the day by the Cistercians. It is not so much that their rule denies them the distractions that we call pleasures, as it is that their concern for God tears them away from all but the bare carnal necessities. They live only to pray.

The booklet includes brief histories of the monastic foundations in Kentucky, Georgia and Utah. We are reminded that the phenomenal growth of new vocations to the elite of Christ has necessitated new foundations. The most recent foundation is that of Our Lady of Guadalupe in New Mexico, which has been sired by the colony of Cistercians in Rhode Island.

The contemplative life and the Cistercian ideal are explained briefly. A reader conducts us through the proto-abbey of the new world—the abbey from which this literature emerges, and a summary of the Cistercian observance is given.

The final essay tells us of the joy of austerity. One needs merely to visit a Cistercian abbey to experience the joy that resides there. Whatever association one may have built between the ideas of austerity and gloom will be dispelled completely upon hearing the final evening *Salve Regina* trembling as a warming cup of joy above the heads of the monks gathered in loving communion before they go to bed.

ED WILLOCK

Bits of Wisdom

THE HUMAN WISDOM OF ST. THOMAS

Arranged by Joseph Pieper

Sheed & Ward, \$2.00

In its sub-title this is described as a Book of Philosophy. The compiler has taken significant principles from

Thomas and just set them forth in order in major categories but without comment. What emerges is, quite literally, a meditation book. We have been nourished on spiritual maxims without sufficient sound theology and philosophy. Here is the solid substance. Anyone who has done any serious thinking for himself will find these principles to be like torches shedding great light.

CAROL JACKSON

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE presents a SCHOOL FOR INTERRACIAL LIVING

at St. Joseph Farm, Marathon City, Wis.

St. Joseph Farm is an ideal place to hold a summer school. The courses will include instructions in the liturgy by religious leaders who have been long recognized as authorities on the subject. Instructions in interracial techniques will be provided by experienced Friendship House staff workers. Daily Mass and common recitation of the Divine Office will be conducted. For recreation, a library, a place for swimming, and folk dancing will be made available.

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- One week \$25-\$30
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION WRITE: Betty Schneider, Dean, Friendship House, 4233 South Indiana Avenue, Chicago 15, Illinois.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Early this month we are publishing

THE SACRAMENTAL WAY

Papers selected from the proceedings of the liturgical conferences from 1940 to 1945, edited by Mary Perkins, with suggestions for study by the Rev. Shawn G. Sheehan.

For any Catholic who wants to know the full story of the sacraments, this book is a must. It is a book that every Catholic should have in his library.

Ask
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them

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Progressive's Complaint

I am seven.
People say, "how sweet!"
I'm dressed so well—
I'm warm, my feet
Have rubbers. You can tell
Someone takes care of me.

I am seven.
I'm always clean. You see
I've no kid brother to start a fray,
No little sisters to play with me.
And yet, how hard for one I pray!

I am seven.
But I'm so old.
I've food and clothes and shelter.
Shots for pox, diptheria, TB, cold,
Send my germs a-helter skelter.
I'm smart in school. My IQ's high.
So, why? Why so old and bitter?
My folks "stay young," while I
Am reared each day by a different sitter!

MARIE LAUCK